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REMARKS

A check in the amount of \$27, based upon the Applicant's small entity status, is enclosed to cover the official fee for three (3) claims in excess of twenty (20) claims.

Claims 1-3, 6, 8 and 15-18 are rejected, under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e), as being anticipated by Mott et al. '570. The Applicant acknowledges and respectfully traverses the raised anticipatory rejection in view of the following remarks.

Mott et al. '570 describes a multi-contact connector (500) for medical use comprising a male plug which is an electrical wire (502) with annular contact zones, designed to be introduced inside a female socket which is a carrier (526) defining an axial internal passage (527) with spring contact elements (530).

This carrier is located in a housing (504) closed by a nose piece (512). When this nose piece is in an open position, the connector allows the insertion of the wire in the carrier and when it is in a closed position, the connector established electrical contact between the wire and the carrier (column 22, lines 47-58), contact spring arms (532) of the carrier resting against contact zones of the wire. In this arm, the connector comprises a pair of jaws (536) located between the carrier and the nose piece and radially movable between released and clamped positions in response to the movement of the nose piece between the open and the closed positions (column 23, lines 33-42). In clamped position, the inner face (538) of each jaw engages an opposing side of the carrier (526) with each protrusion (540) extending into a respective one of the openings (534) in the carrier and engaging the corresponding contact spring arm (532) (column 23, lines 54-58).

This connector (500) is completed by an interlock mechanism (550, 552) to prevent the nose piece to be moved from the open to the closed positions when the guide wire is not fully inserted into the carrier (column 24, lines 23-27) and the contact zones do not coincide with the contact element. This interlock mechanism comprises a plurality of locking pins (550) and a locking sleeve (552) which is axially slidable inside the housing between locked and unlocked positions (column 24, lines 31-36) in response to movement of the wire as it is inserted into the carrier (column 24, lines 54-56). When the wire is fully inserted in the carrier, it pushes the

locking sleeve rearward into its unlocked position counter to the force of a compression spring (558) (column 24, lines 60-67) allowing the nose piece to be closed to establish electrical contact.

In contrast to the claims of the current application, the Applicant respectfully submits that the connector Mott et al. '570 is very complicated, bulky and expensive because it requires several components with very accurate manufacturing tolerance: a male plug (wire 502), a female socket (carrier 526), a pair of jaws (536), an interlock mechanism (550, 552), a housing (504) with its nose piece (512). The axial insertion of the wire (502) into the carrier (526) necessarily requires the use of a rigid wire like a pin. This insertion is not secure and tends not to be reliable. Thus, the Mott et al. '570 connector requires an additional mechanism to secure the wire completely and correctly inserted into the carrier and to guarantee that the contact zones coincide with the contact elements. To establish electrical contact, the nose piece does not directly act on the female socket but on an intermediate piece, namely, a pair of jaws. This connector cannot receive more than one male plug.

On the other hand, the connector according to the present invention is very simple, relatively small and economic because it requires only three components, namely, a male plug (6), a female socket (7) and a tightening device (8). The same connector can also receive one or two male plugs to double electrical contacts.

The wire (4) can be flexible because it is located in a longitudinal groove (63) radially open in the male plug (6). The female socket (7) has a longitudinal housing (71) radially open to receive the male plug (6). Thanks to their complementary forms, the male plug is automatically and correctly positioned in the female socket and contact zones (61) automatically coincide with contact elements (72). No additional mechanism must be provided to achieve assembly.

The tightening device (8) only comprises an insulating sleeve (80) mounted on the female socket (7) and moveable along its axis between the open and the closed positions. In open position, the longitudinal housing is released to allow the setting of the male plug, and in the closed position, the longitudinal housing is covered by the sleeve exerting a radial pressure

on the male plug establishing electrical contact. The sleeve directly acts on the male plug to establish electrical contact without any intermediate piece.

In order to emphasize the above noted distinctions between the presently claimed invention and the applied art, the independent claims of this application now recite the features of

[a] multiple contact connector comprising: a) at least one male plug (6) with each male plug (6) comprising an elongated and electrically insulated support (60). . .b) a female socket (7) comprising an elongated and electrically insulated body (70) having at least one longitudinal and electrically insulated housing (71). . .c) the support (60) of the male plug (6) has a geometry which is complementary to that of the housing (71) of the female socket (7) allowing assembling with one another by nesting; d) the contact zones (61) and the contact elements (72) face one another so that when the support (60) is nested with the housing (71) . . .and e) a tightening device (8) for maintaining the support (60) in the housing (71). . .

Such features are believed to clearly and patentably distinguish the presently claimed invention from all of the art of record, including the applied art.

If any further amendment to this application is believed necessary to advance prosecution and place this case in allowable form, the Examiner is courteously solicited to contact the undersigned representative of the Applicant to discuss the same.

The Applicant thanks the Examiner for indicating that claims 4, 5, 7 and 9-14 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claim(s). In accordance with this indication, the subject matter of claim is incorporated into independent claim and this amended independent claim is now believed to be allowable. As claim(s) depend, either directly or indirectly, from this amended independent claim, those dependent claims are also believed to be allowable.

Claims 1-18 are objected to for the reasons noted in the official action. The newly entered claims are believed to overcome all of the raised objections concerning this claims.

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If any further amendment to the claims is believed necessary, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned representative of the Applicant to discuss the same.

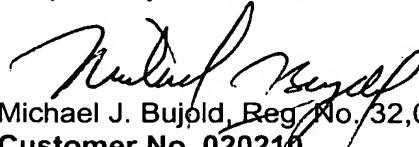
In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that all of the raised rejection(s) should be withdrawn at this time. If the Examiner disagrees with the Applicant's view concerning the withdrawal of the outstanding rejection(s) or applicability of the Mott et al. '570 references, the Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner to indicate the specific passage or passages, or the drawing or drawings, which contain the necessary teaching, suggestion and/or disclosure required by case law. As such teaching, suggestion and/or disclosure is not present in the applied references, the raised rejection should be withdrawn at this time. Alternatively, if the Examiner is relying on his/her expertise in this field, the Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner to enter an affidavit substantiating the Examiner's position so that suitable contradictory evidence can be entered in this case by the Applicant.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the raised rejection(s) should be withdrawn and this application is now placed in a condition for allowance. Action to that end, in the form of an early Notice of Allowance, is courteously solicited by the Applicant at this time.

The Applicant respectfully requests that any outstanding objection(s) or requirement(s), as to the form of this application, be held in abeyance until allowable subject matter is indicated for this case.

In the event that there are any fee deficiencies or additional fees are payable, please charge the same or credit any overpayment to our Deposit Account (Account No. 04-0213).

Respectfully submitted,



Michael J. Bujold, Reg. No. 32,018

Customer No. 020210

Davis & Bujold, P.L.L.C.

Fourth Floor

500 North Commercial Street

Manchester NH 03101-1151

Telephone 603-624-9220

Facsimile 603-624-9229

E-mail: patent@davisandbujold.com